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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by the Reverend Camille Murray, pastor of Georgetown Presbyterian Church.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we give You thanks for the many provisions of this day and for the simple and sustaining gifts which enrich our lives. We thank You for the beauty and bounty of this great Nation. We offer You praise for the heritage we share, the faith we cherish, and the freedoms we enjoy.

As Your grateful people, we ask that You would remind us of the callings You have placed upon our lives. We pray that we would be faithful to those callings and to those entrusted to our care. May those elected to lead be given a double portion of Your Spirit, that they may have vision and wisdom from above.

Gracious God, keep us pure in thought, honest in speech, and diligent in our pursuit of the common good, all for the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Minnesota.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I want to thank Camille Murray for our opening prayer this morning.

Reverend Murray currently serves in our Nation's Capital as the 20th senior pastor of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church. The church was founded in 1780, and Reverend Murray is the first woman pastor.

Reverend Murray grew up in my home State, in Mahtomedi, MN. She holds degrees from Vanderbilt University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Oxford University, and Wesley Seminary.

Reverend Murray's congregation is nonpartisan, with the belief that God transcends that which divides us.

We are so happy that she led us today in prayer.

Thank you very much.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Democrats have chosen to deny the Senate a final vote on the President's deal with Iran. They made their choice, but that doesn't mean the discussion is over.

Today we will have another opportunity to address the lifting of congressionally mandated sanctions as called for in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Today we will have an opportunity to vote on a question of policy: Should Iran be left with a threshold nuclear program, one now recognized by the P5+1, and receive billions of dollars in sanctions relief without any linkage whatsoever to other aspects of its foreign policy adventurism. That is the question before us.

I will discuss that vote in greater detail in just a moment but first a reminder of how we got to this point.

Here is what we know about the nuclear deal with Iran. It is President Obama's deal with Iran, not America's

deal with Iran, because the President did everything possible to cut the American people out and to block their elected representatives from having a say.

He refused a treaty, because as Secretary Kerry noted quite candidly, he wasn't interested in negotiating something an elected Congress could support. He then had to be persuaded that resisting legislation to allow Congress an up-or-down vote on it—just as he had to be persuaded when Congress passed sanctions legislation that helped bring Iran to the table in the first place—would be futile. In other words, he didn't want the legislation that gave us an opportunity to respond to the President's deal with Iran. It had so many supporters, he knew the veto would be overridden. Then he finally convinced his party, which had voted unanimously for the legislation that gave Congress an opportunity to weigh in on the President's deal, to then deny the American people the up-or-down congressional vote Democrats had promised. Our Democratic friends went to extreme lengths to protect the President politically. Because they did, Democrats ensured that this would be not just Obama's deal with Iran but the Democratic Party's deal with Iran too.

It is a deal that allows Iran to grow stronger in any number of ways: diplomatically, militarily, in terms of trade, and in terms of its enrichment program. It is also a deal that achieves hardly any of the Obama administration's primary goals. Secretary Kerry once declared that an accounting of Iran's military-related nuclear activities "will be part of a final" deal. "If there is going to be a deal," he promised, "it will be done." But it isn't.

Secretary Moniz once declared that he expected we would have anytime, anywhere access to Iranian nuclear facilities. We will not.

President Obama once declared that "the deal we'll accept is they end their nuclear program—it's very straightforward"—or perhaps not quite so

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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